

~ Unofficial Minutes~

Minutes have not been approved by the Board of Directors.

MINUTES

RHODE ISLAND HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

January 23, 2015

The 352nd meeting of the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority was held Friday, January 23, 2015. Chairwoman Ms. LaSalle called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Ms. Faith LaSalle, Chairwoman

Mr. Daniel Egan

Ms. Christine Jenkins

Mr. Robert Delaney

Ms. Leah Williams Metts

General Treasurer, Seth Magaziner

Members Absent:

Dr. William Croasdale

Mr. John Howell

Also Attending:

Ms. Gail Mance-Rios, Acting Executive Director

Mr. Charles Miller, CIO

Ms. Linda Makhlouf, HR

Ms. Dana Peterson-Fatuda, Administration

Ms. Patia Bertram, Accounting

Mr. Tom Pearce, Account Resolutions

Mr. Michael Joyce, S&G

Mr. Kevin Elliott, Acct. Resolutions

Ms. Winnie Antos, Accounting

Ms. Liza Cohen, Legislative Affairs

Mr. Gregory Stack, Budget

Mr. Stephen Strycharz, Council 94 President

Ms. Heather Hudson, Governor's Office

1. Approval of Minutes: Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Director Search Committee held on December 19, 2014 was unanimously approved. The Minutes of the RIHEAA Board of Director's meeting held on December 19, 2014 and December 30, 2014 were unanimously approved.

2. Chair's Report: Ms. LaSalle stated the Governor has asked that the Board hold off on making any major decisions regarding contracts and any major changes to the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority (RIHEAA) for the next 60 days. Ms. Hudson concurred with Ms. LaSalle's statement.

Ms. LaSalle stated that an RFP for Auditing Services will go out, but the process is on-going. The Auditor General's Office will be included in the review.

Ms. LaSalle reported that Capital Cities will review the CollegeBoundfund, and will be paid out of the CollegeBound Administrative fund.

Ms. LaSalle stated at the next Board meeting in February, Ocean State Charities will attend to provide the Board with an overview on endowments.

3. Acting Executive Director's Report: Ms. Mance-Rios stated that the full service contract with Navient is effective April 1, 2015.

Ms. Mance-Rios stated that the requirements for the Accountability Transparency Act can be viewed on the RIHEAA website; the one outstanding issue is the comprehensive compensation package for an Executive Director, which is still on-going.

Ms. Mance-Rios reported that she visited the New England Consortium at the Boston Federal Reserve, there they discussed processes and shared information on Rhode Island's CollegeBoundbaby Program.

Ms. Mance-Rios stated that RIHEAA received a \$7,500 grant to

analyze the State Grant Program and how to make it more effective. The New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) will give the Board a presentation at the next Board meeting.

4. Scholarships & Grants: Mr. Joyce reported that a survey posted to the website of the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (NASSGAP) showed a great variation among states that use an EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) cut-off. At least two of those states use a cut-off similar to the federal Pell Grant cut-off of \$5,158 EFC. This means a student with an EFC of \$5,159 or higher does not get a grant.

5. Financial Projections: Ms. LaSalle stated there is a conference call scheduled today at 3:00 p.m. to discuss the 2016 projections. In an email Mr. Cook stated that if we reduce the expenses of WaytogoRI we will have to adjust the numbers, but would save \$500k if the program was eliminated. Mr. Delaney stated he has concerns with XAP, their financials, usage numbers and ownership of the data. Mr. Delaney asked to see XAP's financials and a presentation at the next Board of Director's meeting.

6. Budget vs. Actual: Ms. LaSalle stated Mr. Cook is reviewing the financials on a regular basis. There are no surprises to report for the financials ending November 2014.

7. Cash & Investments: will wait for Dr. Croasdale.

8. Personnel: Reorganization Plan & Interim Executive Director Searches: Ms. Mance-Rios stated that we are moving forward with the downsizing of the agency. Mr. Delaney stated that they reviewed the budgetary shortfall of the agency and positions were identified that were no longer a fit. An organization chart was developed to reflect the lines of business. This is why the Personnel Committee was formed.

9. Date of Next Board Meeting: Friday, February 20, 2015

There being no further business to come before the Board of Director's, the meeting adjourned.

Adjournment was at 9:35 a.m.

Mr. John Howell
Secretary